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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
4 May 1955

TO : Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: May Day 1955

SUMMARY

The Communist celebration of May Day in the non-Communist world was marked by restraint and over-all propaganda and activity seemed slightly less militant than last year. Propaganda in the Soviet bloc, however, revealed the concern with which Moscow views West German rearmament, but stressed Soviet military capability to counter German rearmament. Its over-riding theme was the increasing solidarity within the "peace camp" and the growing might and determination of the bloc to resist "imperialist" efforts to set up aggressive blocs. In the Satellites, the celebrations were nonmilitant and the crowds unenthusiastic.

Outside the bloc, the Communists played a subdued role in keeping with their emphasis on united-front tactics. In Italy, non-Communist labor and the Church dominated the activities, with the Pope declaring May Day to be the feast day of St. Joseph Artisan. A much smaller crowd than last year participated in the West Berlin celebration, and reported Communist plans to disrupt the occasion failed to develop. Communist May Day activities in Japan and Indonesia were more restrained than last year.

May Day slogans from Peiping substituted "alliance" for "friendship" in reference to Sino-Soviet relations, thus giving more emphasis to the Sino-Soviet treaty. A new slogan which called for the "struggle for the liberation of Taiwan" perpetuates the line stated in July 1954 and indicates no change in the propaganda commitment to take Formosa.

A more detailed description of May Day events is at annex.

NON-BLOC COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES

United front tactics dominated the propaganda and activities of the Communists outside the Sino-Soviet bloc. For example, the WFTU appeal, as compared with appeals of the two

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previous years, suggests continued attention on this tactic. It introduces a new note in stating that workers in capitalist countries have a stake in society which they should strive to preserve in the face of war danger brought on by "American imperialism."

In keeping with this general line, the Communists played a subdued role in the celebrations.

For the second year in a row, May Day street demonstrations were forbidden in Paris. Consequently, about 9,000 Communist workers held a rally in Vincennes Park termed by one observer as the "Commie Fourth of July picnic."

Although the Italian Communist Party made its perennial effort to monopolize May Day, it was the quietest since World War II. Non-Communist labor organizations and the Church captured the public's attention to the celebration. The address of the Pope gave the day a religious tone, and he declared it the feast day of St. Joseph Artisan. In Trieste, Togliatti addressed a strongly policed crowd estimated at 15,000. Except for a minor fracas, which was quickly controlled, no disorder took place.

In West Berlin, a crowd of some 40,000, about one tenth of last year's, participated in May Day celebrations organized by the Social Democrats. Reported plans that the West Berlin Communist youth organization, with assistance from East Berlin Communists, would attempt to disrupt the West Berlin program did not materialize. Few arrests were made by the police and there was a minimum of disorders.

Partly due to heavy rain, the turnout of about 900,000 for May Day rallies in Japan was the smallest since the end of World War II. The "May Day Executive Committee" had expected over 1,600,000. Anti-Americanism, which was used as the basis for the 1952 May Day riots, was played down this year. The Japan Communist Party elements and the leftist Koreans, who usually have been in the vanguard of disorders, were among the quietest in conformity with their previously announced policies of nonviolence and co-operation with "democratic" forces.

May Day celebrations reported from Djakarta were more subdued than those of recent years. Soviet, Chinese, and Czech representatives appeared on the platform at one of the gatherings. However, there were very few anti-American and anti-Dutch slogans noted.

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SOVIET BLOC

The German question was featured this year on the occasions of the May Day and October Revolution celebrations, as last year. This year it was accompanied by greater stress on Soviet military strength and a new Soviet slogan calling on Soviet and Satellite workers to respond to the "enemies of peace" by unifying forces and increasing "defense might."

The other variations in Moscow's slogans and comment, as compared with last year's, paralleled current Soviet tactics in domestic and foreign policy. Two new slogans pointed up Communist hopes for continuing propaganda advantages from the talks on Austria and the Afro-Asian conference.

The reintroduction into the slogans for the first time since the war of an injunction to "persistently master Marxist-Leninist theory" was symptomatic of the increased emphasis on ideology--a trend noticeable in Soviet domestic and some Satellite propaganda since mid-1953. Along these lines, the traditional slogan of the Communist movement, "Proletarians of the World, Unite!", proclaimed in the Communist Manifesto of 1848, was added to the Number One greeting to the working class throughout the world.

The use of this slogan, associated with the "heroic" period of international Communism, suggests greater emphasis on the fundamental ideological aims of Communism. It is probably designed to reassure hard-core Communists in countries outside the Sino-Soviet bloc that a more militant phase of action will inevitably follow the present soft tactics appropriate for the period of "peaceful coexistence." Although the Satellites failed to adopt this slogan, it was used by Peiping.

USSR

The heavy rain in Moscow on May Day reduces the reliability of any comparison between the 1955 parade and the parade of last year. The weather frustrated the apparent Soviet plans to stage an unusually impressive display of air power, and also forced cancellation of a large portion of the civilian parade.

Practice fly-bys in April had indicated that the air display was to emphasize offensive aircraft, including medium and heavy jet bombers and a new turbo-prop swept-wing aircraft. (The jet bombers had first been displayed on May Day of last year.) The USSR may also have intended to demonstrate advances

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in air defense, since a new twin-jet swept-wing all-weather fighter and a new single-jet fighter were revealed in pre-parade rehearsals.

The ground force parade followed a practice noted in each major Soviet celebration since 7 November 1953, by displaying several new and modified pieces of artillery equipment. This year these included heavy field pieces with considerably improved mobility, as well as heavy antiaircraft guns, some of which may have been incorporated into Moscow's air defenses since late last year.

Defense Minister Zhukov's 10-minute speech was relatively mild, and did not contain any specific anti-American charges. He reiterated the charge that ratification of the Paris agreements forced the adoption of additional measures to safeguard Soviet bloc security, and claimed that the Soviet armed forces, equipped with the latest weapons, are "capable of routing any alignment of enemies." Last year's speech by the then defense minister Bulganin was likewise short and relatively mild in tone.

SATELLITES

Satellite spokesmen used the occasion to point again to the plans and necessity for establishing a joint Soviet-Satellite military command to "frustrate the imperialists." East German premier Grotewohl announced that his government was preparing for a "peace and friendship treaty" with the USSR and the other Satellites.

In East Berlin, the main emphasis of the parade was on internal security. Included in the parade were 1,000 unarmed police (Volkspolizei) and 3,500 "sportsmen" from the Society for Sport and Technical Training, half of whom carried small-caliber rifles. No uniformed troops (KVP) marched, however. American officials in Berlin report that in comparison to previous years, the enthusiasm and enjoyment of the spectacle by the audience was substantially reduced, almost to the point of perfunctory reaction.

In the other Satellites, May Day was celebrated without noteworthy incidents. The parades were nonmilitant and the large crowds, mustered for the occasion, were described as unenthusiastic. Except in Hungary, there were very few specific

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anti-American slogans and posters. The Hungarians, however, resurrected much of the anti-American material they had used to a marked degree during the 4 April Liberation Day celebration.

COMMUNIST CHINA

Peiping's 1955 May Day observance was marked by an accent on peace and industrialization. In contrast to previous years, the May Day parade did not include military personnel.

May Day slogans contained several significant changes. The new demand to "struggle for the liberation of Taiwan and the elimination of the traitorous Chiang Kai-shek" perpetuates the line that was started in July 1954, indicating no change in the propaganda commitment to take Formosa. Another slogan gives more emphasis than its 1954 predecessor to the Sino-Soviet treaty by substituting "alliance" for "friendship" between China and the Soviet Union as the guarantee of peace in the Far East and the world. In contrast to 1954, another slogan uses the unique Maoist phrase "people's democratic dictatorship" to describe the theoretical form of the Chinese Communist state necessary for "building....a great socialist state." This suggests that the Chinese Communists hope to keep Mao's contribu- 25X1
tions to Communist theory in circulation.

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